

Comparative Seed Manual: CYPERACEAE

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This seed manual consists of photos and relevant information on plant species housed in the Integrative Subsistence Laboratory at the Anthropology Department, University of California, Santa Barbara. The impetus for the creation of this manual was to enable UCSB graduate students to have access to comparative materials when making in-field identifications. Most of the plant species included in the manual come from New World locales with an emphasis on Eastern North America, California, Mexico, Central America, and the South American Andes.

Published references consulted¹:

1998. Moerman, Daniel E. *Native American ethnobotany*. Vol. 879. Portland, OR: Timber press.

2009. Moerman, Daniel E. *Native American medicinal plants: an ethnobotanical dictionary*. OR: Timber Press.

2010. Moerman, Daniel E. *Native American food plants: an ethnobotanical dictionary*. OR: Timber Press.

Species included herein:

Carex athrostachya

Carex obispoensis

Carex obnupta

Carex pachystachya

Carex pansa

Carex ultriculata

Cyperus esculentus

Fimbristylis thermalis

Schoenoplectus californicus

¹ **Disclaimer:** Information on relevant edible and medicinal uses comes from a variety of sources, both published and internet-based; this manual does **NOT** recommend using any plants as food or medicine without first consulting a medical professional.

Carex athrostachya



Family: Cyperaceae

Common Names: Slender beak sedge, Slender leaved sedge, Long-bracted sedge

Habitat and Growth Habit: This perennial herb is native to California and other regions of western North America and is found in wetlands, marshes, and meadows.

Human Uses: This species can be used for erosion control and bird attraction. There may be other human uses that are undocumented at this time.

Sources Consulted:

<https://plants.usda.gov/core/profile?symbol=CAAT3>, accessed October 23, 2019.

https://www.calflora.org/cgi-bin/species_query.cgi?where-calrecnum=1518, accessed October 23, 2019.

http://ucjeps.berkeley.edu/eflora/eflora_display.php?tid=17271, accessed October 23, 2019.

<https://calscape.org/Carex-athrostachya-0>, accessed October 30, 2019.

<https://www.watershednursery.com/nursery/plant-finder/carex-athrostachya/>, accessed October 30, 2019.

Carex obispoensis



Family: Cyperaceae

Common Names: San Luis Obispo sedge, San Luis sedge

Habitat and Growth Habit: This species is native to California and can be found in coastal sage scrub and grasslands. This is a rare plant and is endemic to California.

Human Uses: It is noted that San Luis Obispo sedge is good species for gardening. Notably, there may be other human uses that are not documented at this time.

Sources Consulted:

<https://plants.usda.gov/core/profile?symbol=CAOB2>, accessed October 23, 2019.

https://www.calflora.org/cgi-bin/species_query.cgi?where-taxon=Carex+obispoensis, accessed October 23, 2019.

Carex obnupta



Family: Cyperaceae

Common Names: Slough sedge, Bailey, Coast carex

Habitat and Growth Habit: Slough sedge is native to western North America and can be found along the Pacific Coast range, bogs, marshes, and wet meadows.

Human Uses: Moerman describes several uses of this species to Native Americans. First of all, this plant is used as food/grass to feed animals. Additionally, the leaves are used in basketry by many groups. *Carex obnupta* is also used in the process of making clothes and moccasin insoles. Lastly, the leaves, if sharp enough, can be used in shaving for men as seen with the Hesquiat.

Sources Consulted:

Moerman 1998

http://www.calflora.org/cgi-bin/species_query.cgi?where-taxon=Carex+obnupta, accessed October 30, 2019.

http://www.nwplants.com/business/catalog/car_obn.html, accessed October 30, 2019.

<https://www.sevenoaksnativenursery.com/native-plants/grasses-rushes-and-sedges/carex-obnupta/>, accessed October 30, 2019.

<http://web.pdx.edu/~maserj/ESR410/Carexobnupta.html>, accessed October 30, 2019.

Carex pachystachya



Family: Cyperaceae

Common Names: Chamisso sedge, Thick head sedge

Habitat and Growth Habit: This plant is Native to western North America. Its distribution includes forest and grassland environments.

Human Uses: The use of this species are not well documented at this time.

Sources Consulted:

http://www.calflora.org/cgi-bin/species_query.cgi?where-taxon=Carex+pachystachya, accessed October 30, 2019.

<https://plants.usda.gov/core/profile?symbol=CAPA14>, accessed October 30, 2019.

Carex pansa



Family: Cyperaceae

Common Names: California meadow sedge, Sand dune sedge

Habitat and Growth Habit: This species is native to western North America ranging from British Columbia to California. It can be found in prairies and near the coast. Notably, a lot of the natural habitat for California meadow sedge no longer exists.

Human Uses: This species can be used in modern gardening and is often a lawn substitute or used in meadow making.

Sources Consulted:

<http://www.laspilitas.com/nature-of-california/plants/153--carex-pansa>, accessed November 4, 2019.

<http://www.greenleeandassociates.com/carex-pansa.html>, accessed November 4, 2019.

<http://www.baynatives.com/plants/Carex-pansa/>, accessed November 4, 2019.

[https://calscape.org/Carex-pansa-\(Sand-Dune-Sedge\)?srchcr=sc5d9972c770376](https://calscape.org/Carex-pansa-(Sand-Dune-Sedge)?srchcr=sc5d9972c770376), accessed November 4, 2019.

Carex utriculata



Family: Cyperaceae

Common Names: Northwest Territory sedge, Beaked sedge

Habitat and Growth Habit: This species is native to North America and found in Canada and the United States. It is also found in Northern Europe and Asia. Some habitats that Northwest Territory sedge is found in include riparian, swamps, marshes, bogs, and fresh water aquatic ecosystems.

Human Uses: It is noted that the rhizomes from this species have been used in traditional basketry.

Sources Consulted:

http://www.calflora.org/cgi-bin/species_query.cgi?where-taxon=Carex+utriculata, accessed November 4, 2019.

https://www.wildflower.org/plants/result.php?id_plant=CAUT, accessed November 4, 2019.

<https://plants.usda.gov/core/profile?symbol=CAUT>, accessed November 4, 2019.

Cyperus esculentus



Family: Cyperaceae

Common Names: Yellow nut-sedge, Yellow-nut grass, Yellow sedge, Tiger nut, Tiger nut sedge, Earth almond, Nut flat sedge, Chufa sedge, Rush nut

Habitat and Growth Habit: This species is found most often in fresh water habitats. It is distributed worldwide in temperate and tropical zones. This species native status is not well understood, but some sources believe it is native to California (this does not mean that it is only native to California, however).

Human Uses: Yellow-nut sedge is used often in cultivation for food and medicine. To start, the tuber can be eaten raw, dried, or cooked. The tuber have been noted to be used in making almond flavored drinks. The tuber can also be used to make plant milk. Moreover, an oil can be obtained from the tuber, and it is noted that it compares to olive oil. In Ayurvedic medicine, the tubers are used to treat flatulence, indigestion, diarrhea, and other ailments. The nuts are also used for treating the digestive system, urinary system, and female reproductive system. More sources are necessary to evaluate the effectiveness and traditional uses of this plant for medicine.

Sources Consulted:

<https://plants.usda.gov/core/profile?symbol=cyes>, accessed November 4, 2019.

<http://www.pfaf.org/user/plant.aspx?LatinName=Cyperus+esculentus>, accessed November 4, 2019.

https://www.calflora.org/cgi-bin/species_query.cgi?where-calrecnum=2583, accessed November 4, 2019.

<http://eol.org/pages/1121991/details>, accessed November 4, 2019.

http://ipm.ucanr.edu/PMG/WEEDS/yellow_nutsedge.html, accessed November 4, 2019.

Fimbristylis thermalis



Family: Cyperaceae

Common Names: Hot springs fimbry, Hot springs fimbristylis

Habitat and Growth Habit: This species is native to southwestern United States, Northern Mexico, Arizona, and Nevada. Notably, the plant is native to California and considered a rare plant. Hot springs fimbry can be found in alkaline mud and sand.

Human Uses: The human uses of this plant are not well documented at this time.

Sources Consulted:

http://www.calflora.org/cgi-bin/species_query.cgi?where-taxon=Fimbristylis+thermalis, accessed November 4, 2019.

<https://plants.usda.gov/core/profile?symbol=FITH>, accessed November 4, 2019.

<http://swbiodiversity.org/seinet/taxa/index.php?taxon=1940&clid=2580>, accessed November 4, 2019.

Schoenoplectus californicus



Family: Cyperaceae

Common Names: California bulrush, Southern bulrush, Giant bulrush, California club-rush

Habitat and Growth Habit: This species is native to the coast and central valley of California. California bulrush can also be found in Oregon and Florida and there is some belief that the species may also be indigenous to the Hawaiian Islands. This species is found in marshes.

Human Uses: This species is used by Native Americans for food, roofing, and cloth. California bulrush is also used in erosion control, in wetland restoration, and as a wind or wave buffer.

Sources Consulted:

https://www.calflora.org/cgi-bin/species_query.cgi?where-calrecnum=9604, accessed November 4, 2019.

<https://plants.usda.gov/core/profile?symbol=scca11>, accessed November 4, 2019.

[http://calscape.org/Schoenoplectus-californicus-\(\)](http://calscape.org/Schoenoplectus-californicus-()), accessed November 4, 2019.

https://www.wildflower.org/plants/result.php?id_plant=scca11, accessed November 4, 2019.